

# THE BRAILLE MONITOR

INKPRINT EDITION

VOICE OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND



The National Federation of the Blind is not an organization speaking for the blind--it is the blind speaking for themselves

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## THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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(February, 1960)

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## PUBLIC ASSISTANCE -- AN IMPORTANT REPORT OF THE ADVISORY COUNCIL

The recent report to Congress of the Public Assistance Advisory Council is likely to be the focus of attention in the current session of Congress. The recommendations of the Council are sweeping in extent, substantial in character and likely to have a significant impact on all categorical aid programs. The over-all conclusion of the Council is that there has been "great progress" in the public assistance programs in the 25 years of national participation but that there are "serious gaps and inequities" that still remain in coverage, in adequacy of public financial assistance, and in availability of high quality services.

Congress directed the establishment of the Public Assistance Advisory Council in the Social Security Amendment of 1958. The model was a similar council which has existed for many years dealing with the social insurances. The Council consists of 12 members appointed by the Secretary of HEW and is chaired by the Commissioner of Social Security. According to the authorizing legislation they are "to represent employers and employees in equal numbers, persons concerned with the administration or financing of the State and Federal programs, other persons with special knowledge, experience, or qualifications with respect to the program, and the public." The task assigned the Council has been to review "the status of the public assistance program in relation to the old-age, survivors, and disability insurance program, the fiscal capacities of the States and the Federal Government, and any other factors bearing on the amount and proportion of the Federal and State shares in the public assistance program."

The Council was appointed early in 1959. It met seven times and early in January, 1960 submitted its report to Congress. Because of the over-all importance of the Council recommendations and because of their bearing on the blind and on the program and proposals of the Federation, we are here excerpting its principal recommendations. Space will not permit us to review all of them.

1. "The Social Security Act should be amended to add a new provision for Federal grants-in-aid to States for the purpose of encouraging each State to furnish financial assistance and other services to financially needy persons regardless of the cause of need (including, for example, the unemployed, the under-employed, and the less seriously disabled)."

2. "States should have freedom of choice in determining whether public assistance should be administered as a single program or as separate categorical programs. States should have the following

options:

"a. Establishing, under a new title, a single category for financially needy persons to include all those covered under the existing programs and additional groups of needy persons not now covered, thereby eliminating the separate categories;

"b. Continuing the present categorical programs and adding a new category of general assistance under the new legislation;

"c. Retaining one or more of the present Federally-aided categories (for example, aid to the blind which, in a few States, is administered by another State agency) and consolidating the remaining groups of needy persons in a single category; or

"d. Expanding the existing Federally-aided categories to include additional needy persons."

3. Currently Federal aid to dependent children is only available to children deprived of parental support or care by reason of "the absence, death or incapacity of one parent." This program "should be expanded to include any financially needy children living with any relative or relatives. . . ."

4. "The great majority of States have residence requirements that, with much resultant hardship, exclude many financially needy persons from public assistance. Federal grant-in-aid should be available only for those public assistance programs imposing no residence requirement that debar any needy person in the State from help to which he would otherwise be entitled."

5. The Federal Government should exercise leadership in assuring that assistance payments are at levels adequate for health and well-being by doing the following: (1) "developing up-to-date budget guides; (2) making them available to the states; (3) "requiring periodic State reporting on budgets in use, and on actual individual payments in relation to these budgets; (4) "publishing periodically information. . . indicating adequacy of appropriations and assistance payments in each State."

6. "Steps should be taken by the Federal, State, and local governments toward assuring that health services available to public assistance recipients are comprehensive in nature and of high quality. Improvements in medical care should not be accomplished by reducing money payments to recipients."

7. "States should be encouraged to apply the same assistance standards to all categories of needy persons, . . . without partiality for one categorical group as compared to another. . . . Currently there is often striking disproportion in payments in the same State among the public assistance programs; for example, old-age assistance payments tend almost everywhere to be relatively more adequate than aid to dependent children payments."

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DISABILITY INSURANCE AND PUBLIC ASSISTANCE  
TO BE CONSIDERED BY WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

Honorable Wilbur D. Mills (D., Ark.), Chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, House of Representatives, stated in a press release that he would ask the Committee on Ways and Means "to include in its agenda during the second session of the 86th Congress consideration of various suggestions which have been advanced for improving the Federal Social Security program. The Chairman stated that, due to the many inquiries and the general interest in this subject, he felt the Committee would want to develop an agenda during the second session on Social Security revision. He recalled that the Committee, during the course of the past two years, has collected a considerable amount of information, including that which was presented during the comprehensive hearings in 1958 and 1959 and that close study has been made of a number of these proposals, although no decision has been made by the Committee with respect to any of them. . . .

"Chairman Mills indicated, as examples of some of the improvements which the Committee may want to consider and which very probably would not necessitate any increase in existing contributions rates, the following:

"First, repeal of the existing requirement that a disabled individual who otherwise meets the requirements of the law must be at least 50 years of age before he can qualify for disability insurance benefits.

"Second, removal of the requirement of a six-months' waiting period before benefits can be paid again in cases where the disabled person, who has unsuccessfully tried to return to work, comes back on the disability insurance rolls.

"Third, extension of the 12-months trial work period for persons drawing disability insurance benefits to include all types of rehabilitation programs, rather than limiting such rehabilitation

programs to those administered by the Federal or State governments.

"Fourth, possible changes in the insured status requirements so that individuals now reaching retirement age or who have already reached retirement age will be able to qualify for insurance benefits with fewer quarters of coverage than is now required by existing law.

"Fifth, payment of monthly insurance benefits to wives and widows who are permanently and totally disabled.

"Sixth, extension of coverage to various groups which have indicated a desire to be included in the insurance program.

"Seventh, correction of minor inequities and administrative matters that have been brought to the attention of the Committee.

"Among these changes which have been suggested which the Committee may want to consider but which would require some increase in the existing schedule of contributions rates are the following:

"First, an across-the-board increase in monthly benefit payments, including modifications in minimum and maximum benefits,

"Second, the addition of new types of insurance benefits, and

"Third, an increase in widows' benefits.

"The Committee asked the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare in 1958 to make a study of certain aspects of the 'retirement test' in the Social Security program. The Committee expects this report will be submitted soon for its consideration.

"A report of the Advisory Council on Social Security Financing has been submitted to the Committee which recommends certain changes which would increase the interest yield to the insurance fund.

"In addition to changes in the old-age, survivors', and disability insurance provisions of the Social Security Act, Mr. Mills stated that the Committee may also want to consider any possible needed adjustments in the public assistance, child welfare, and other titles of the Social Security Act. The Committee may wish to give particular attention to those changes in old-age, survivors', and disability insurance programs which will help, both immediately and in the long run, to reduce the cost of public assistance to the general taxpayer. . . ."



## GOOD AMMUNITION

The Virginia Federation of the Blind will sponsor public assistance legislation based on the Nevada law during the next session of its legislature. The explanatory material being sent to its own members, as well as to legislators, is so well written that it would be of great help to those in other states where similar legislation will be sought. Those who plan to appear at state legislative hearings or to write to members of their legislature will find the points made in this brief to be of real value and this material should be saved for future use.

**PRESUMED NEED.** There has been a certain amount of confused thinking among those who have advocated what they have called "a minimum grant." The two terms are not synonymous. The Virginia Federation makes the modest request that minimum presumed need shall be no less than \$65 a month and points out: "This does not mean that each person would receive this amount. Income and resources not exempt will still be considered in determining the amount of his payment. The difference between these and his established need would determine the amount of payment. Nor does the \$65 represent a ceiling. In the event that a person's need is in excess of this amount, he would continue to receive a comparable payment."

**TO ABOLISH LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY OF RELATIVES.** "This provision would not prevent relatives from making voluntary contributions to blind individuals who are in need, but it would relieve local boards of the requirement that they seek court action compelling them to do so. The present legal requirement makes of the blind person a burden to his family. By depleting the resources of the family, it creates hostility and resentment toward the blind person at a time when his family bonds should be strengthened. A legal provision which destroys family unity, engenders hostility and hatred, and forces a blind person to become a burden on his family and a drain upon its resources is contrary to the purposes to be served by public assistance."

**TO EXEMPT PROPERTY USED AS A HOME.** "The existing practice of considering the home of an applicant for or recipient of aid to the blind as a resource when determining his eligibility for aid penalizes rather than rewards him for thrift and care in the management of his affairs."

**EXEMPTED PERSONAL PROPERTY.** The proposed law would exempt personal property up to \$1,500 value from consideration as a resource of an applicant for or recipient of public assistance to the blind. It also removes personal effects, and articles and

equipment used in self-support, from the category of "personal property." "These last assets may then be used to further an applicant's efforts to achieve complete rehabilitation." The proposed law would give official recognition to the principle that the role of public assistance is no longer that of merely providing a punitively meager subsistence -- barely sufficient to keep body and soul together for a while -- but should be and must be geared to a rehabilitation objective.

TO REPEAL LIEN LAW. "This bill would abolish the present statutory requirement which subjects the property of an applicant for or recipient of aid to the blind to forfeiture for aid payments received by him. Federal law does not require the state to impose liens on the property holdings of blind aid recipients. But if the state elects to do so, Federal law requires that the Federal Government be reimbursed for its proportionate share of the payments made to the individual. Since 65% - 80% of each dollar collected must be remitted to the Federal Government, the present practice of recovering from the estates of needy blind persons make the state, in large measure, a collector for the Federal Government. When the State of Virginia forecloses a mortgage on the property of destitute blind persons it benefits only slightly from such exactions. Individuals who have worked and saved to own their own homes and then lose their sight find that they are penalized and the Federal Treasury is enriched. For the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Federal Treasury the amount of money actually involved is small indeed, but to the blind person it may well represent a lifetime of work and sacrifice to provide a secure home for himself and his loved ones."

One more feature of this proposed legislation provides that, whenever the Federal Government shall increase the amount of income exempted from consideration as a resource to an applicant or recipient of blind aid, such increase shall immediately go into effect in Virginia -- whether such increase is either permissive or mandatory.

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#### MINNESOTA RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL THREATENED

From the St. Paul Dispatch: "Parents of 94 children attending classes at the Minnesota Braille and Sight-Saving School, Faribault, have been asked by the school superintendent, J. C. Lysen, to attend a Department of Administration 'task force' meeting at the school January 22 'because the future of the school is at stake.' Lysen said his school has been subjected to many harassments during the last 8 years, and that the Services for the Blind Division in the Department of Public Welfare has attempted to take over the school management

and modify its program. . . . Lysen said . . . that only 2 new students were admitted last fall because of policies set up within the Department of Public Welfare. 'It is public knowledge,' said Lysen, 'that the Supervisor of Services for the Blind disagrees with the legally defined purpose of the Braille and Sight-Saving School, namely, that it should be academically-centered and prepare capable students for college attendance.' Supervisor of the Services for the Blind is C. Stanley Potter, St. Paul. Attendance at the school was 127 students in 1954 and has dropped to 94 this year. . . . Lysen said the mother of one child wrote to him recently stating that the Services for the Blind Division had denied her the right to have her child admitted to the Fari-bault school. . . ."

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## NEWS FROM CANADA

The CCB Outlook reports that the Canadian Council of the Blind held its annual convention in Montreal, September 28 to October 1. Richard Kinney, deaf-blind assistant director of the Hadley Correspondence School for the Blind, Winnetka, Illinois, was a featured speaker. Two new affiliates were admitted from British Columbia. The Council voted to continue the legislative battle for a universal cost-of-living allowance, free of the means test. Mrs. Sadie Bending, of London, Ontario, was re-elected national president.

"At least 205 blind or nearly blind Canadians had their vision restored through corneal transplants in the year ending March 21, 1959. . . .

"Experiments with a new drug and two types of nerve gases to combat glaucoma were outlined at the Canadian Ophthalmological Society annual meeting in October. The nerve gases, developed for use on the battlefield to kill, can 'lower pressure in the eye and restore part of the drainage channels,' said Dr. S. M. Drance, of the University of Saskatchewan. 'They have been 80% effective on glaucoma patients.' The gases used are phospholine iodide and demercarium bromide. Dr. Herbert Fitterman of Vancouver General Hospital, said the new drug -- called anthranilic -- has reaped positive results in tests conducted with 8 patients. A group of Vancouver doctors began using the drug following publication of a report on its effectiveness in a Japanese medical journal. By using the drug to break down substances in acids obtained from the liver, the composite medication is utilized to assist in relieving pressure on the eyeball. . . ."

## MORE BRAILLE MUSIC SCORES

Senator Wayne Morse has introduced S-2760 "to establish a library of Braille musical scores within the Library of Congress." He said, in part: "Mr. President, . . . My bill would make musical scores available on a loan basis to blind residents of the United States and its possessions. The bill would further authorize the appropriation of such Federal funds as may be required for this purpose. . . . Braille musical scores have enabled many blind persons to become gainfully employed. It is true that certain regional libraries -- eight, to be exact -- do lend Braille musical scores, but the listings in the catalogs are definitely limited. The lesser known works as well as selections for such instruments as flute, oboe and bassoon are generally not available. It is also true that certain organizations have Braille musical scores for sale only, scores that may neither be borrowed nor exchanged. These, of course, are of real value but many, if not most blinded persons are of limited financial means and cannot afford to purchase the Braille music library they desire and need. . . . I shall never place a balanced budget ahead of more balanced lives for our unfortunate blind brethren. . . ."

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### FROM TEXAS

The December issue of the Lone Star Leader contains at least 3 items of general interest.

1. President Roberson summarizes changes in the Federal Credit Union Law: "The permissive maximum unsecured loan limit is increased from \$400 to \$750; the permissive loan maturity limit is increased from 3 to 5 years; dividends may be declared by the board of directors; compensation to any director, committee member or officer other than the treasurer is prohibited."

2. Excerpt from a letter received by David Ronecker of San Antonio, from L. Pinder, chief engineer of the sound recording studio, Royal National Institute for the Blind, London: "We are now field testing 100 machines designed to accommodate half-inch tape, completely enclosed in metal containers called 'cassettes.' A cassette is mailed to the user, who then places it on his machine and switches 'on.' It will then play up to 75 minutes, at which time an announcement says: 'end of tract 1 -- turn cassette over and press button at front to change to next tract'; and so on to the end of the book. The machine itself is a simple, playback reproducer equipped with an automatic stop, operated by a 2,000-cycle note. This note acts to cut the

machine off if the user does not turn the cassette over when told. Three hundred cassettes are being used in these tests. Each cassette contains about 1600 feet of half-inch tape, with 18 sound tracks. The playing time is up to 20 hours. This equipment is undergoing a test of some months duration and even if approved will not be in production for at least a year."

3. Following the death of a state counselor, Marcus Roberson wrote to Lon Alsup, executive director of the Texas Commission for the Blind, recommending that the vacancy be filled by a visually handicapped person. The answer: "... the Board has adopted the policy of requiring a rehabilitation counselor to have at least 4 years of college." Marcus comments: "Such a rule, we think, will prevent most blind persons from ever qualifying for the position of rehabilitation counselor, although they may have natural ability and factory experience. It is the duty of a rehabilitation counselor to train blind persons for jobs in industry, to determine whether the applicant for a particular job has the necessary mechanical aptitude to fill the job, and to judge from his own experience what job or jobs the applicant is best suited or qualified for. In order to make these decisions, he needs industrial experience far more than he needs formal or academic education. Furthermore, no governmental agency can pay salaries in competition with private industry. Thus, by adopting this arbitrary and capricious standard, the State Commission will have to content itself with the lower quality of college graduates and has completely and unwisely chosen to ignore the great potential workforce of competent non-college graduates. It is hard to understand why such a rule was ever 'adopted' in view of the fact that Mr. Alsup himself has been no further than high school."

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#### BLIND WOMAN WINS WRITER'S AWARD

From Toronto Daily Star, via National News of the Blind (Canada):

"... The winner of the medal which is awarded to the writer of the best feature article of the year went to a woman who is totally blind and entirely deaf. She is Mrs. Marjorie McGuffin of Vancouver, B.C., founder of the Canadian League for the Deaf-Blind, editor of its quarterly Braille magazine, Dots and Taps, and national consultant for the CNIB on the welfare of the deaf-blind.... The intrepid woman had her only formal training in writing through a correspondence course from the University of Chicago. In a sensitive and moving article in The Star Weekly Mrs. McGuffin told something of her

isolation. 'While the blind listen to the singing of the birds, the deaf can enjoy the beauty of their colors and their graceful flight,' she pointed out; 'While the blind love the sound of rushing water, the deaf delight in watching it tumble with its sparkle and spray. The blind hear the wind as it rustles through the boughs, but the deaf watch the trees sway with the force of the breeze. But the doubly afflicted have neither.... '

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## WORKSHOP OF THE FUTURE

(The following is taken from the December, 1959, issue of Listen):

" 'I see nothing in the nature of blindness which calls for sheltered employment. I see nothing in the essence of blindness which demands a workshop,' said the Reverend Thomas J. Carroll, director of the Catholic Guild for the Blind, in an address to the National Association of Sheltered Workshops and Homebound Programs on the opening day of the 1959 conference of the National Rehabilitation Association. Title of this talk, in which Father Carroll criticized outmoded thinking and attitudes toward the blind, was 'The Workshop of the Future -- a Refuge or a Necessity?' Pointing out that blindness is different from quadriplegia, paraplegia, arrested tuberculosis, neurological disorders and numerous other handicaps for which a workshop situation may help solve employment problems, he stated that there is nothing in blindness or in its nature which interferes with work tolerance. Blind persons are the same as others, he said, and are capable of regular employment. In the present day, Father Carroll maintained, to establish a workshop for persons whose only handicap is blindness 'would be to build an anachronism.' He added, 'When we establish such workshops -- when we allow our older workshops for the blind to go on in their older pattern without a true screening process and without psycho-social help, then we who are going to employers to tell them that blind persons are capable of regular employment ... are at the same time setting up or confirming institutions which belie our words.' Too many blind persons, the Guild director said, are forced by public attitudes and by workshop thinking to retreat to workshops for the blind as a refuge from a competitive world. The goal that the handicapped person take his rightful place in the community of his fellows can never be realized through workshops, he declared, stressing the fact that placement in a workshop is not rehabilitation. In the closing of his address, Father Carroll discussed the changing concept of work and recommended a national workshop on 'work' to find out 'what work' means, what it meant yesterday,

what it means today, and what it will mean tomorrow.' Until such a workshop is held,' he said, 'all conferences on workshops must of necessity work at surface level.' Placement and the concept of work were examined in another of Father Carroll's talks at the NRA conference, this time at a luncheon meeting of the National Council of State Agencies for the Blind. Emphasizing the need for rehabilitation of blind persons, he said that 'placement without rehabilitation is the sewing up of a festering wound -- and all too often the wound is sewed up without the antibiotics of proper psycho-social assistance.' Placement should be not simply for money, Father Carroll told the group, but should be in keeping with the dignity of the individual. He explored the 'work concept' and again suggested the establishment of a national workshop on the subject, with 'philosophers, political scientists, sociologists, cultural anthropologists, students of American culture -- sitting down together to get deep underneath and find out what it is all about.' Only through such a workshop, he claimed, 'can we begin to know what the importance of work is for handicapped persons in our day.' "

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## A PUBLICITY PROJECT

by Gene Motz

The Zenith Club of the Blind of Phoenix, with the cooperation of the Arizona State Association of the Blind, carried on an education project last fall, not connected with fundraising. We rented a small booth at the Arizona State Fair with the object, among other things, of giving our members experience in dealing with the public. In the 12 days of the fair, using a tape-recorded educational talk and a public address system, we obtained 573 eye bank will signatures, talked personally with countless interested spectators, gave out innumerable samples of Braille, had a blind power sewing machine operator demonstrate her abilities, exhibited typing techniques and displayed blind handicrafts and inventions. We had good newspaper, radio and TV coverage. In all, 34 people devoted 240 man-hours to this project with the total expenditure of \$59.50.

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## STATE LEADER PASSES

Many will be shocked to learn of the sudden death of Will Nichol, president of the Utah Association for the Blind, which took place at 1:30 A. M. on Tuesday, January 5. I had not known him

intimately but I had received many warm and friendly letters and he was very conscientious about reporting developments in his state organization. His loss to the organized blind movement in Utah will be a severe one. He is being succeeded by the first vice-president, Mr. Robert Krook of Providence, Utah.

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### "AN INVESTMENT IN HUMANITY"

A recent issue of the Springfield (Missouri) Leader-Press carried the story of a blind widow, Mrs. Eugenia Winston, whose husband passed away before they had completed payment on their home. She attempted to keep up the \$50 a month payments out of a \$55 a month blind pension check and actually did so over a stretch of several months. Then her home teacher happened to read about Hubert Smith and the Holmes Foundation in a Braille magazine. Mr. Smith was apprised of the circumstances and asked for a small loan. Instead he took up the entire mortgage and wrote Mrs. Winston that it was to be an interest-free loan to be paid back at the rate of \$25 every 3 months.

"To Mrs. Winston," the article continues, "the loan was a man-made miracle. To Hubert Smith it was just one of the many beneficial steps he has taken to help the sightless. Smith has helped thousands through trust funds and at 57 is probably America's most successful blind businessman. Through perpetual trusts to which he and others have donated hundreds of thousands of dollars, the blind are given money for their homes, Braille magazines, clocks, radios, Bibles, watches, clothing, musical instruments and scholarships.... In the April issue of Nation's Business, Smith is depicted as a shy man, in spite of his many business activities. His ambition is somehow to help the 14 million totally blind persons in the world, 'As long, that is, as I don't have to make a speech about it,' he said. 'I made one once. It was terrible. I was very embarrassed. I sat down and turned to the fellow who had introduced me. 'How would you have made that speech?' I asked him. 'Under an assumed name,' he replied....'

"At last Mrs. Winston can rest in her little home, feeling secure that it will be hers for as long as she wants it. For that security she thanks the man from Georgia. Some day he too will get returns on his investment in humanity, she feels."



## MOUNTAIN STATES CONFERENCE

by Jesse Anderson

The meeting which was held in Idaho Falls on December 1 was the result of a resolution which I introduced at the convention of the Gem State Blind in August of last year. Many of us who live in these "wide open spaces" are becoming concerned about the number of blind students in such states as Montana, Idaho, Utah, Wyoming and Nevada, and with the trend of more and more students going into the public schools, we are wondering if some of these schools can survive. Also, in the states mentioned above, the blind are extremely scattered and it is very difficult for vocational counselors to cover their big territories adequately. My resolution called upon the Gem State Blind to invite leaders of and workers for the blind of the 5 states to meet and discuss these two problems. I was chosen as chairman of an interim committee and sent invitations to presidents of blind associations, principals of schools for the blind, and directors and staff members of state agencies for the blind. People from Idaho, Montana and Utah were present at the meeting, but we had no representation from Wyoming or Nevada because of previous commitments of their state directors. They did, however, send letters setting forth their ideas.

The meeting, of necessity, was of an exploratory nature, but the sense of the gathering was that some kind of regional pre-vocational setup is needed, and also a special study should be made into the feasibility of a regional school for the blind. It was decided, however, to concentrate on the rehabilitation problem first. We did have some very fruitful discussions and became better acquainted with the problems of the blind in this region. Another meeting has been tentatively scheduled for Saturday, March 19, at Pocatello, Idaho.

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### DR. GRANT COMPLETES MISSION IN PAKISTAN

(Editor's note: The letter from which the following excerpts are taken was postmarked Karachi, January 9.)

"... My last report to you told of the seminar I was conducting in an effort to impart some realistic ideas to prospective teachers who will have at least a few blind children in their schools. It finished with quite a degree of success, judging by the fact that 43 (including visitors) started the course, and 40 were still there at the end. It was not easy, especially getting them to understand the social implications of blindness. I went to Rawalpindi to attend a meeting with the

Minister of Health and Social Welfare on the subject of the education and welfare of the blind. That was a very productive meeting. I shall send you the proceedings when I receive them. Later I went to Peshawar, where I had the opportunity to go through the Khyber Pass. That was a rare experience. At Peshawar I was able to interview the Director of Education and a few others. In Lahore I was also able to arrange a 1-day conference on the education and welfare of blind persons. This last came on a holiday weekend and I had little time for preparation. I had hoped for about 10 to be present but 45 showed up and stayed the whole day. Back in Karachi once more, I had the privilege of observing a UNESCO conference on compulsory primary education. . . . So these have been busy days. I spent Christmas visiting a small blind school. New Year's Day I assisted in writing up the proceedings of the Lahore meeting.

"Last Sunday I attended the organization meeting of a new association of the blind. I had frequently voiced the opinion here that work for the blind is in everybody's hands except the blind themselves, who are neither represented nor consulted. I could not find even one blind person on the many committees on blind welfare! The president of the new organization is Dr. Famima Shah, a physician who became blind about 3 years ago. The rest of the officers are recent blind graduates, plus a newly-blinded lawyer. I enrolled 4 fine young men from Lahore in this organization, one who is going in for law, another interested in physical therapy, a third teaching in a school for the blind -- but without any specialized training -- and the fourth a young fellow still in school, though well over school age. All members are keenly interested in promoting the interests of the blind, and I think they are off to a good start. . . .

"India next!" Isabelle.

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### JOHN TAYLOR RESIGNS

Two-and-a-half years is a brief time in which to make one's mark. Yet John Taylor has done just that. In two-and-a-half years as a member of the staff of the Federation and chief of its Washington office, he has made an enviable and well-justified reputation.

John Taylor came to the staff of the Federation in August, 1957. He had before him an excellent record in industrial and agricultural work, in academic training, in graduate work in special education, in a number of years of teaching at the Tennessee School for the Blind. In organizational work he had risen to the presidency of the Tennessee

Federation of the Blind. He had played an active role of leadership in the National Federation of the Blind. He had served upon its executive committee, a seat which he vacated when he joined the staff, in the light of an organizational policy that paid employees may not occupy elective offices.

The challenge to which John Taylor responded in his Washington assignment for the Federation was one which called for qualities of diplomacy, physical and mental vigor, the executive capacity to master a heavy workload and full belief in the blind. John displayed all of these qualities from the beginning. Experience and responsibility intensified and matured him.

John won the confidence, the respect and the warm personal liking of many of the state and federal officials, legislators and Federationists with whom he dealt. His work with the staff of the United States Civil Service Commission has carried our collaborative effort with that agency to a point of further advances in employment opportunities for the blind in the government service. His work on the Federation-sponsored King bill, improving public assistance programs, on the Curtis bill, providing a nationally advantageous solution to the so-called Pennsylvania-Missouri aid problems, on bills expanding disability insurance to cover many more blind people, on sheltered shop legislation, on bills dealing with vocational rehabilitation, has been steady and effective. He bore a fair share of the burden of our Kennedy-Baring bill campaign. He has been responsible for organizing the Federation's participation in the current series of Elliott Committee workshop and hearings. He and George Keane together, the latter acting in his capacity as chairman of the AAWB legislative committee, have been the architects of a common front made by the Federation and the AAWB with respect to a significant range of current measures, the common front to which both parties have adhered scrupulously and which augurs so much in terms of forward progress in the cause of the blind. When not engaged in these multiple tasks and accomplishments, John has spent his time counseling, aiding and supporting Federation affiliates in many parts of the country.

The loss to the Federation of the services of a staff member of this activity and quality is a most serious one. It is mitigated only by the fact that though John has left the staff of the Federation, he has not left the Federation. The Federation will be able to continue to count on his valuable contribution.

Since John's letter of resignation deals with a number of Federation staffing and other problems, it is set forth below in full.

"Dear Chick: This will confirm our telephone conversation in which I indicated my intention to leave the staff of the Federation. As you know, I have considered taking this step since July of 1958. On February 1, I shall join the staff of the Iowa Commission for the Blind as assistant director in charge of field operations.

"I take this step with mixed emotions. On the one hand, my work in the Federation has been a source of great satisfaction to me. It has offered me the opportunity to be an intimate part of the most dynamic movement of our times. Working under your direction as founder and philosopher of the movement, as well as its continuing executive, has been one of the richest and most rewarding experiences of my life. No experience could have been more stimulating or gratifying than my Washington assignment for the past 2 1/2 years, and I appreciate the fairness and forthrightness which has always characterized your dealings with me.

"On the other hand, I have my own career to consider, especially in view of my recent marriage and increased personal responsibilities.

"The Federation has always suffered from financial instability. As a result, and through the fault of no one, the members of the staff have not been able to count on employment security. We have been a people's movement, and it seems the people are traditionally poor. In recent years we have had increasing amounts of current income but this has rested on precarious foundations and we have been unable to build up any reserve. The slightest fluctuation in our national economy or the partial or total failure of any one of our mail campaigns, could bring our entire operation virtually to a standstill. The Federation has already found it necessary to curtail the staff. By action of the executive committee at St. Louis, one staff position with corresponding secretarial services was eliminated. The move was accompanied by drastic reductions of the budget in other areas. By these cuts, the Federation can carry on during the present year and, perhaps, have a balance in its treasury. This, however, is not enough. The first call on the treasury should be to meet the travel and other expenses of officers and other members of the Federation who are contributing their time gratis. As long as there is a single instance in which a volunteer worker in the Federation's cause cannot travel, write or speak for the Federation because of lack of funds, while at the same time a staff member is paid a salary and also receiving travel, secretarial and other expenses to do the same job, we are not getting the most efficient use of our meager resources. Paid staff should only be hired to the extent that we cannot get able volunteers to do the work of the organization.

"Over and above this, is an even more compelling consideration. It is not enough for us to scrape by on current income or merely to have a surplus of a few thousand dollars which would not be adequate to tide us over any real emergency and which certainly do not allow for any effective long-range planning or for the retention of staff in hard times.

"You will recall that I sponsored the resolution for the establishment of an endowment fund at the San Francisco convention in 1956. It was my hope at that time that we could build up substantial reserves and to be able to count with certainty on at least a minimum of steady income regardless of the hazards of fundraising campaigns. It is now almost four years later and the endowment fund has about \$10,000 in it. These would yield a bare \$600 a year at 6%.

"Reducing the staff by one more position will make it possible to begin to build up some reserves. Sound financial management and the building of a permanent staff both rest on the creation of substantial fiscal reserves and on assured income.

"In accepting a position with the Iowa Commission, I shall have an opportunity to work in a program which embodies a philosophy in which we all believe and in which methods are being developed for the practical application of that philosophy. I look forward with enthusiasm to that experience.

"In leaving the staff of the Federation, I do not leave the Federation. I shall continue to work in the cause and the organization with all the time and energy at my disposal. I hope that you will call on me for any service to the organization that I can render. Cordially yours,"  
John Taylor.

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#### FROM OUR READERS

"I must begin with an apology -- especially after the splendid way you wrote up my story in the June edition of the Braille Monitor-- for not writing sooner. I was pleasantly surprised to hear from many of the blind people who read the June story and who expressed their complete sympathy. For obvious reasons you may not use my name but you have my word of honor that what follows is completely true and accurate. A number of blind workers are employed in what is called the 'contract shop.' Here all sorts of assembly work is done. For 16-week periods groups of so-called 'trainees' are assigned here. You probably know that the agency gets about \$30.00 a week for each

of them, while the trainees themselves get perhaps a bit more than carfare and lunch money. Then, instead of being placed, they are told to look for outside employment. The agency thus makes room for another batch of trainees. The earnings of even those who are permanently employed average, in many cases, no more than 20¢ an hour -- which means they have to turn to blind assistance. In the metal shop there is a group of men who have for many years been making copper and brass novelties. The average employee is permitted to work only from 12 to 20 hours per week. These workers earn 60¢ per hour. They are also compelled to turn to blind assistance.

"We had open house at the Guild last fall. Every department was on display, each working at its own specialty. We were admonished beforehand not to have any conversation with the visitors -- these same visitors who contribute large sums to the upkeep of the Guild. They made sure that none of us would volunteer information on the extent of our earnings. If these visitors should ever become aware of how little we earn, they would be appalled. . . ."

(Editor's note: When an item by the same writer appeared in the "Here and There" column last June, [page 39, inkprint] I added: "If anyone from the New York Guild for the Jewish Blind wishes to comment on the above, space in the Braille Monitor will be made available." No comments were received from that source but the space will again be made available for the same purpose.)

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"Just to let you know how much we enjoy the Monitor and to thank you for this service." Jean and Elizabeth Fraser, Auckland, New Zealand. (Christmas card.)

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"... I feel we were most successful at the workshop and sub-committee hearings in New Haven. We submitted 9 proposals, 8 of which were adopted unanimously, with a very few minor changes. Although we lost the vote on our 'Independent Living Services' proposal, I do not feel that we lost on the issue. There was no opposition on the part of the agencies, except on this measure. Even proposals I felt would cause some controversy seemed very acceptable." Al Nichols, Bellows Falls, Vermont.

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"... I look forward each month to receiving my Braille Monitor. It is the only magazine I read from cover to cover. It has always been my custom to read only those articles in other magazines which happened to be of particular interest to me. I think you do a wonderful job in editing the Monitor and wish you all the success in the world in your continuation of this work during the coming year." Donald Clarkson, Hannibal, Missouri.

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"I was very sorry to read about our financial difficulties. I do hope that my organization will be able to help in some way to clear it up. I strongly advocate the return of the extra greeting card money to the NFB for the Monitor. I believe that one way that individual organizations can help the Monitor is by recording it each month and holding a second meeting for listening to the tape and discussing the material and information, thereby cutting down on circulation...." Jerry Fields, Tucson, Arizona.

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"... It is my strong personal opinion that all of the state affiliates would be doing all of the blind a great service by turning back the increase in the greeting card allotment they will be receiving from the NFB this year. It won't be much of a sacrifice for any of us inasmuch as we have done without it until now and I am sure that in this financial emergency our national organization will be able to make much better use of the money than we could...." Gene Motz, Phoenix, Arizona.

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"Thank you very much for your kindness in sending me the Braille Monitor which I very much appreciate as I am keenly interested in all blind welfare. I would also like to thank you for the help you are giving to support the two American magazines for the deaf-blind, Skylark and Good Cheer. I correspond with both Miss Cunradi and Mrs. Cornelius and I was one of the first to get those magazines over here. It is often said that the deaf-blind are the orphans of blind welfare, and it is cheering to know that a powerful organization is giving a helping hand. You are putting up a great fight for your fellow blind. In most organizations there is jealousy and once the organization is well established someone tries to oust the founders who did all the spade-work. It used to be said that the blind were profitable merchandise for those who exploited them. I think that was stamped out in this country when the Blind Persons Act was passed." Alex C. Edwards, Aberdeen, Scotland.

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"Belatedly, but with gratitude, I can answer your inquiry about Frank Lugiano's recovery, and I am glad to report that he is back in action again. There is good reason for believing that there was no damage, or, at worst, little permanent damage to his heart. Now our anxiety is lest he may once more work himself into a state of exhaustion and collapse. Frank Lugiano's labors were truly prodigious and there is small wonder that he finally broke down.

"On December 1 representatives of the Blind Merchants' Guild met to 'consult with the secretary' of Welfare.... On the whole, it was a stormy affair. The committee made it painfully clear, by asking a few searching questions, that the list of earnings from which she was reading and upon which she was basing her claim that all

all blind stand operators were exceedingly prosperous, consisted of nothing more than a compilation of only the most profitable vending stands. The unprofitable ones had been omitted from the list. She had not been a party to the deception but her resentment was directed against us -- because we had discovered and exposed the trickery. She flatly refused to disclose what is being done with the upwards of \$75,000 paid into the revolving fund annually by the stand operators. Thought is now being given to the wisdom of instituting a test case.

"I hope soon to submit the Pennsylvania legislative report for 1959 -- surely a most singular year. On December 16 the Governor approved the bill to increase the pension from \$60 to \$70 a month. This is no kingly ransom, but the increase is some 2 million dollars a year and hence is no minor victory. On December 21 the Governor approved H. B. 1613, re-organizing the Department of Welfare and abolishing the State Council for the Blind. Happily, by dint of a fight and compromise, the law of December 21 contains a re-enactment of the right to organize law. This time it has been broadened to cover the whole department including -- we hope -- the pension program." William Taylor, Jr., Media, Pennsylvania.

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"For a long, long time I have been enjoying the magazine which you produce with such skill. (One might say that it takes an editor to appreciate an editor.) Somehow you manage to possess yourself of choice bits of information and to package them interestingly, so that there is no doubt at all that the Monitor will be read 'from kiver to kiver' by anyone lucky enough to receive it.

"I'm sure I have more than one item tucked away for use in our Journal -- news items, for which I need no permission. But what about reprinting at least a part of 'Call for Pioneers,' by Richard Kinney? And what of your general policy on such matters?

"I'd like to know very soon, for my current issue may have just the place for a piece of that nature and length. If the answer is a simple O.K., won't you wire (collect) to that effect? If it's more complicated -- well, it will be nice to have my first letter from you! Expectantly," Ruth A. Eckhart, Editor, Journal of Rehabilitation, Washington, D.C.

(Editor's Note: In replying to this gracious letter I wired Miss Eckhart that she is entirely free to use any Monitor material she may find suitable.)

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"The letter which I wrote to the Lions Magazine concerning the American University of Beirut and its policy of excluding blind



students is published in the January issue, page 44. . . . For 3 reasons, I for one would presently be in favor of reducing the proportion of greeting card funds which is distributed to the state affiliates, and increasing the proportion which is retained for use at the national level. (1) There is now increased opportunity and need for valuable work at the national level. (2) NFB revenue from White Cane Week and from organized labor is falling off. (3) Most of the state affiliates have matured to the point that their improved experience and ability in fundraising should enable them to sustain a larger proportion of the expense of the work which is necessary at the state level." J. Henry Kruse, Jr., Chatham, New Jersey.

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"... I was sorry to hear that the NFB has been forced to cut its staff because of lack of funds. From what Henry Kruse told me after his experience in New Hampshire, these fellows were doing a real dedicated job. I am quite certain that our Council will make some financial contribution to the NFB. . . ." George E. Burck, Leonardo, New Jersey.

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"... Would you be good enough to send me a Braille copy of Kenneth Jernigan's paper, 'Local Organizations of the Blind, How to Build and Strengthen Them'? This would surely be relevant to the discussions which are now going on in our own Federation circles with regard to the possibility of introducing some form of affiliation such as has made your Federation the powerful organization of the blind which I am confident it is and will remain. . . ." John Jarvis, London, England.

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(Editor's Note: Harry Stiller is the founder of the Philomatheon Society of Canton, Ohio, a chapter of the Ohio Council of the Blind. A subsidiary corporation has been manufacturing the ceramic Braille ashtrays which so many of our chapters have found to be such profitable sales items.)

"... We are about to start a fundraising campaign to raise \$150,000 for a new building. The first floor will serve as a workshop in which we may do light industrial contract work, such as packaging, assembling, etc., also sewing room, display and office space. The second floor assembly room will be of a size to seat 150 persons, with a large modern kitchen and all other needed facilities. . . . We will set up a sales plan to market blind-made merchandise, plus the Braille ashtray and a new item, a plastic letter opener with the Braille alphabet embossed around the edge of the handle. I am enclosing samples of the latter, together with a copy of our descriptive brochure. On one side of the handle we will do hot stamping; any message our customers may wish, not to exceed four lines of print. . . . I have the

consent of our Board to offer to all state and local NFB affiliates a flat 10% on all orders, either for resale by their members or on orders obtained from business firms, such as banks, insurance agents, real estate brokers, etc. Thousands of business firms purchase give-away items every year as a gesture of good will toward their customers. On these orders we would deal direct with the business houses in delivery and collection of accounts so that the individual organization would make no investment and take no risk. . . . We require from 30 to 60 days for delivery because of the typesetting and printing. Those interested may write to me for prices, samples and brochures. . . ."

Harry Stiller, Canton Philomatheon Society of the Blind, Inc., 2810 Tuscarawas Street, West, Canton 8, Ohio.

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"I am wondering if you saw or if anyone has called your attention to the item in the 'What's New' column of Newsweek magazine, which was reprinted in The Weekly News, telling of a British, French and American firm's plan to produce a new thin phonograph record which could be rolled and mailed in a mailing tube. It could be produced for any speed and the estimated cost would be from 3 1/2¢ to 5¢ each. No doubt Monitor readers would be interested in a reprint of this item. Perhaps the NFB should investigate this as a possible method of making the Monitor and other literature available to more of the blind of the country. . . . Tell all your many friends to start loading their piggy banks so they can be sure and make it here in '61. . . ."

Carl K. Slavens, Kansas City, Missouri.

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"... I wish there was some way you could get more money for the Monitor. I personally think the national expenses should be paid first, and what is left distributed to the states. Let the states raise their own money for awhile and they may become more careful in how they use it." William Klontz, Waterloo, Iowa.

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"... My prime reason for writing is to make some comments relative to recent correspondence. A Pennsylvanian, remarking on a mild plea for a return of some 'short fiction stories' in the Braille Monitor, states that he cannot understand why anyone should wish such after considering the 'tons and tons' of fiction and its like in the Braille libraries. It would appear that, contrary to his statement, he has not really surveyed the status of short story fiction in the regionals. Actually there is very little real short story fiction in the regionals, a score of titles being a lucky count based upon press-made books. . . . A person wishing to enjoy short story fiction in American periodicals is overlooked at this time. However, I believe it might be well for you to make a note in the Monitor that the seeker after such literature would be well advised to borrow two British periodicals from their regional (if the regional subscribes to them, as does Cleveland).

These are Hora Jucunda and The Hampstead Braille Magazine. The latter features 2 to 4 short stories per issue, and the former contains short stories and non-topical non-fiction. Both are 48 page magazines. . . . We could still use a short story magazine stateside with American-style fiction. . . ." Warren Sladky, Cleveland, Ohio.

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## HERE AND THERE

At its December meeting the Birmingham chapter elected Mrs. Eulasee Hardenbergh president. For a number of years this was the only Alabama chapter. There are now 4 and the organization of several others is near.

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"A man may see how this world goes with no eyes. Look with thine ears." -- King Lear.

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Hundreds of citizens over the age of 40 flocked to the 1-day clinic organized by the Lions Club on the occasion of Winnipeg's first "Glaucoma Day." Twenty-eight Winnipeg oculists and their respective staffs tested 3,724 persons in 11 hours; 1,401 were tested later. Two hundred and twenty two were referred to their own physicians for further examination. A similar clinic had been held in Glendale, California, earlier in the year.

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England: Mr. R. W. Bonham of Worchester College for the Blind played 11 games of chess simultaneously in Sheffield recently. Two of his opponents were blind. In 3 1/2 hours Mr. Bonham won 5 games, drew 5 and lost 1. . . . The blind German organist, Helmut Walcha, visited London recently to give 4 Bach recitals at the Royal Festival Hall. He memorizes his music very quickly by ear rather than using Braille.

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Two blind residents of British Columbia, both with the same surname, (Lawrence), celebrated their 101st birthdays last year.

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From the Ohio Bulletin: "An allowance of \$1.50 per month is to be added to the assistance plan for blind recipients to cover the expense of more frequent dry cleaning and shoe replacement. When not otherwise provided for by the person's family or by any other person, an allowance is to be made to cover the cost of guide services. Such services will include any extra expense incident to transportation or the cost of maintaining a dog. In either case the allowance is \$5.00 per month.

From the California Council Bulletin: "The new Sacramento chapter has adopted the Starr King School resource class as a club project. 'We are concerned about the 20 blind children, ages 6 to 12; we want them to have the best possible equipment and aids for their education. Our president, Miss Sybil Westbrook, is a resource class teacher. We also want to get as many parents of these children as possible into our club. We want to introduce them to NFB thinking so that their children may begin benefiting as soon as possible.' "

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Word from John Jarvis, who is now secretary general of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind, indicates that the 1962 meeting of the Council's executive committee will probably be held at or near Hanover, Germany, and at a time when members can also attend the International Conference of Educators of Blind Youth. Under a constitutional amendment adopted at Rome, full travel and maintenance expenses of the committee members will be paid by the WCWB and at least 50% of such expenses for the guides. A new decree has just been published in France authorizing the employment of blind, partially-sighted and disabled persons as teachers in public schools. Both Burma and Luxemburg have recently put into effect a compulsory quota system for the employment of the handicapped. In the latter country the orientation program is primarily concerned with "on-the-job training" and the trainee receives both apprentice pay and social insurance. A Disabled Persons Act recently adopted in Norway places the emphasis on the right of all disabled persons to enjoy a normal life and stipulates that they are entitled to free education, vocational training, medical and hospital treatment and necessary prosthetic appliances. There are at present 56 blind judges and public prosecutors employed in Western Germany.

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From the International Journal for the Education of the Blind: "Blindness among school-age children is almost disappearing in some countries. In Austria, a country of about 7,000,000 people, there are only 4 blind children reported in kindergartens and 54 in special schools; in the fall of 1958 not a single blind child came of school age."

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The Observer (Kansas) reports that, as a result of a newly enacted law, the Division of Special Education has been able to send 5 deaf-blind children out of the state for special training. Three are now in the Perkins School for the Blind, (where the tuition is \$5,000 a year), and 2 are in the Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind, (where the tuition is \$3,000 a year). The Division has included \$42,000 in its budget request for next year for the education of deaf-blind and other multiple-handicapped children for whom special provision will need to be made.

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There are 4,000 blind farmers in the United States, according to a recent issue of The Reporter, published by the Industrial Home for the Blind, Brooklyn, New York.

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From an editorial by Anita O'Shea in The Paul Revere (Massachusetts): "When it comes to educating the sighted public about the blind, we are all teachers. It is up to each of us always to keep in mind that we are under the constant scrutiny of curious, uninformed people who are, in all likelihood, forming opinions of all blind people on the basis of their observation of us. We have a responsibility to ourselves and to all other visually handicapped individuals to give the best possible impression to those who are ever watching, ever judging."

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From Nebraska Observer: "In October our state school for the blind played host to the fourth annual girl's 'Play Day.' The Nebraska school was host to 30 girls from South Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois, Missouri and Kansas. Play Day was originated so that the girls could receive the same sort of experiences of travel and association with students in schools of other states which is enjoyed by the boys in their wrestling program. In the past years our girls have gone to Minnesota, South Dakota and Illinois."

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With the present issue of the Independent Forum (North Carolina), Clarence Collins, its editor for the past 2 years, signs off. In my opinion he has done a truly remarkable job. Items: "Miss Gertrude Fisher of Durham, who taught music at the state school for the blind in Raleigh for 47 years, passed away October 8. . . . Charlotte doctors have been awarded a grant for research that may eventually furnish many answers about diseases and problems of the human eye. It will finance a continuing research project into allergic reactions of the cornea. Certain findings have already reversed some traditional concepts of allergic response. The cornea of the eye contains no blood vessels. Experiments have established that allergies can take place in body tissues that do not contain blood vessels. One eye condition to which an answer may be found is a mysterious malady known as sympathetic ophthalmia. This condition can destroy the sight in one eye when the other eye is injured. It is believed that materials from the damaged eye are liberated into the bloodstream, resulting in the formation of antibodies to fight them -- but the antibodies don't know when to quit. They will also attack material in the good eye. Blindness results."

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From Weekly News: "You can clean typewriter keys simply by typing on a new paper marketed by Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Co. The soft fibrous material, which rolls into the typewriter like a sheet of paper, is chemically treated to remove dirt and ink from keys on contact. Price: 3 sheets (enough for 21 cleanings) for 98¢."

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The Montana Observer reports that Arnold Wall of Roundup, Montana is now "happily at work in his own general repair and sporting goods shop." Mr. Wall had been badly injured and blinded in a cave-in accident and had to undergo no less than 65 operations before being finally released. He was determined to attain economic independence, in spite of odds which everyone else regarded as insuperable. He helped build his own shop. Now he specializes in saw filing and the repair of firearms and hand and power mowers. He does a brisk retail business in fishing supplies, firearms and ammunition.

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From Information (Switzerland): "In a recent competition sponsored by the Austrian Federation of Shorthand-Writers, with more than 1400 entrants, the best score was registered by Matthias Bleier, a member of the Austrian Federation of the Blind, writing 250 syllables per minute. Mr. Bleier is a shorthand-typist at the Ministry of Social Welfare in Vienna."

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A short time ago the Monitor published a list of the jobs which graduates of the Oakland Orientation Center were filling. The little magazine published by the adjustment center at Torquay, England, lists the present occupations of those who completed training there during a single year, as follows: machine shop, 21; telephonists, 8; typists (dictaphone and shorthand), 6; clerical, 3; placement officers, electricians, bakery, and fundraisers, each 2; physiotherapist, stand operator, concrete blocks, domestic worker and laborer, each 1. "A 1954 graduate, Hilda Bailey, writes that she shells some 13,000 hard-boiled eggs a week to go into a famous make of meat pie. John Linklater (1951) was praised in the press for his work as electrician for the settings of the pantomime 'Mother Goose in South Shields.' "

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From Listen (Boston): "In a letter to Listen, William Taylor, Jr., Pennsylvania attorney and prominent member of the NFB and of the Pennsylvania Federation of the Blind, describes the bill (right to organize) recently passed in his state as 'the Kennedy-Baring Bill, slightly modified to conform with the wording of our state constitution. . . . The new law may affect the rendering of services to upwards of 25,000 blind people. The Pennsylvania Federation intends so to use this new law that we can demonstrate to all that such legislation. . . will prove beneficial for the blind.' " The same issue quotes from a recent address by Reverend Thomas J. Carroll, entitled "20/000 versus Blindness"; "Father Carroll traced his own attitudes toward the legal definition, ranging from defense of the definition, through discomfort about it, to his first public attack in 1956. . . . He suggested a new definition based on efficiency rather than measurement of acuity in field and, among other suggestions, 'a lot of re-thinking and long-term study ' " (Editor's Note: At the 1954 Assembly of the World

Council in Paris the NFB representative advocated a scrapping of the traditional ophthalmic definition of blindness in favor of an economic definition. He urged that inability to secure employment with remuneration proportionate to actual ability should be the real test, rather than some fraction of theoretical distance vision. His plea was received in stony silence and entirely disregarded by the resolutions committee, but since that time sentiment has been steadily growing in favor of an economic definition of blindness.)

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The "News of the Week in Review" section of the Sunday New York Times will be recorded for blind persons beginning with the edition of January 3, according to an announcement by Recording for the Blind, Inc., 745 Fifth Avenue, New York 22, New York. Available at the rate of \$5.00 for blind college students and \$10.00 for blind adults, for a year's subscription of 52 issues, the news summary each week will be released on one 7-inch disc recorded at 16-2/3 rpm. News commentator Walter Cronkite heads the group of volunteers scheduled to do the recording of the 2-page Times section.

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The Massachusetts Division of the Blind announced that on December 1 the piano tuning rate charged by blind piano tuners working under the "State Use Law" will be raised from \$5.00 to \$10.00. This is the first increase since 1951. Mr. Mungovan stated that this raise was necessary both because of the increased cost of living and in order to keep fees for tuning on a level with the established rate used by sighted tuners.

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The December issue of New Outlook carries an article by Hiram Chappell of OVR, in which he stoutly defends piano tuning as a profitable occupation for qualified blind persons and maintains that it will continue to be so in the foreseeable future. He cites figures to prove his point. Mr. Chappell, who is himself totally blind, speaks from 20 years of experience in this field. He is sharply critical of those residential schools which have discontinued the teaching of this skill. Mr. Chappell spoke at our Louisville convention in 1954 and again in New Orleans in 1957. He has also addressed many state conventions of NFB affiliates.

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And again from Listen: "A program for emotionally disturbed blind children, begun a year ago at the Institute of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, New York, utilizes play therapy and other techniques to help multiple-handicapped children who, because of their emotional disturbances, are rejected by public school classes and schools for the blind. The exploratory program seeks knowledge about the degree to which they can be rehabilitated -- medically, socially, psychologically and educationally. Before Dr. Virginia Axline came

to the Institute, 12 blind children she worked with had been classified as uneducable. The 12 are now enrolled in regular school classes and 'show superior intelligence. ' "

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Carl Lewis, genial stand operator at the Joplin Post Office for 25 years, past president of the Missouri Federation of the Blind and of the Joplin Service Club, and an active Lion, was the subject of a recent feature article in the Joplin News Herald.

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Lawrence Jansen, 47, of Hallock, Minnesota, lost his sight 8 years ago in a farm accident. He set about building a new life. He exploited a natural ability as a mechanic and taught himself to the extent that he can now knock down and repair any car, truck or tractor. He had to do some fast and persistent talking to get himself into an automatic transmission school but he was the only one in the class to score 100 and one of only two persons to make a perfect score from nearly 2,000 who have taken this course across the country.

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It is not generally known that one of the precursors of Braille-writing was a system invented by a French artillery captain. He called it "night reading." His purpose was not philanthropic but military. He wanted officers to be able to read orders in the dark without a tell-tale light. It occurred to him later that it might help the blind, and he gave a talk on his system at a French school for the blind. One of the students was Louis Braille.

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Two remittances have come in since the 1959 White Cane Week Report was completed for the January issue of the Monitor -- \$18.01 from Massachusetts and \$200.00 from South Dakota. These will now have to be considered as 1960 receipts.

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The Indiana Council of the Blind has allocated \$300 as a scholarship to be awarded to a blind citizen of Indiana working toward an advanced degree. If interested, write directly to the Council, 321 North Main Street, Goshen, Indiana.

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Aurora, Illinois has installed ringing bells at 4 intersections, integrated with traffic lights. A high or low pitch indicates whether traffic is moving east-west or north-south.

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From Visually Handicapped Views (Dean Sumner, Editor):  
"At 3:45 on the morning of December 14, Donna gave birth to our fourth son, Brett Larry. The little monster weighed in at 141 ounces. . . . I understand that the Board of Regents of the State of South Dakota has called for bids for the construction of a building in Aberdeen to house a new school for the blind. The 1960-61 school year should be the last



spent in Gary. The removal to Aberdeen will mark the commencement of a new era in the education of blind children in this state."

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From the December Ziegler: "The latest estimate is that there are more than 4,000,000 non-professional tape recorders in the United States." The article goes on to report that while the British are experimenting with multi-track tape and may eventually shift over to that medium for their Talking Book program, the Library of Congress is trying out some 15 prototypes of a tiny playback machine using 7-inch records with as many as 700 grooves per inch which rotate at 8-1/3 rpm. Each side lasts 2 hours and the dimensions of the playback machines are approximately 5x8x9 inches.

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The locations of both the regional workshop (for the 14 Southern States) and of the hearings before the Special Education Subcommittee of the House Committee on Education and Labor, which were originally scheduled for Birmingham, were changed suddenly. The 2-day workshop is to be held in Atlanta, Georgia, on January 25-26 and the hearings will be in Cullman, Alabama on January 27-28. The dates for the Eastern Atlantic Regional Workshop have been announced as February 16-17, at Philadelphia. The states in this region are Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

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From Newsweek: "By closing the eyes of his foreign-language students at the University of San Francisco, the Reverend P. Carlo Rossi, S.J., believes he has opened their minds. The masked students have achieved striking results during drills in French, Italian, German and Spanish. Father Rossi got the idea on a plane, when he was given a mask to help him sleep. 'Instead it helped me to concentrate,' he said."

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United Press: "A new recording system that could compress the 24 volumes of the Encyclopedia Britannica on a reel the size of a spool of thread was described in New York Tuesday by General Electric scientists. 'It would take only a minute to record each volume,' said Dr. Guy Suits, G.E. vice-president and director of research. The system is called thermoplastic recording, or TPR."

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Dr. Thomas Manchester, Jr., 820 Doctors Building, 478 Peachtree Street, North East, Atlanta 8, Georgia, is extremely anxious to locate adults who have survived retinoblastoma. He is conducting an important research project. If any Monitor readers fall into this category, or know of other blind adults who have survived this form of malignancy, please write directly to Dr. Manchester.

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A recent issue of the San Francisco Chronicle points out how James Thurber, the famous blind humorist, is doing everything in his power to make the public aware of the terrible danger from sympathetic ophthalmia, when an injured, useless eye is not promptly removed. He lost one eye in an accident at the age of 7 and many years later developed a cataract on the other one. The cataract was removed but his was one of three unsuccessful operations as against 2,500 which were successful in the same hospital. Over the years, without his realizing it, irreparable damage had resulted from a sympathetic inflammation.

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In reporting the November 4-13 hearings on the disability insurance provisions of the Social Security Act, the American Foundation's December bulletin states that no pending legislation was considered, the time being given over to testimony as to how the law is being administered. It concludes: "Although the Subcommittee and witnesses raised questions about delays in processing claims, appeals procedures, and other administrative matters, the consensus at the conclusion of the hearings was that the Bureau of OASDI had done a remarkably effective job in dealing with the large initial caseload of applicants for disability benefits." Maybe so, but the ambiguities in the language of the present act and the inconsistency with which this language has been interpreted have caused widespread dissatisfaction. Many are confident that the disability insurance provisions will be revised and clarified during the present session.

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From the Promoter (North Dakota): "Our 1960 convention will be held at the Grayer Hotel in Fargo the weekend of June 18. . . . With funds appropriated by our state legislature last session, North Dakota at last has a social service program. The state rehabilitation agency has engaged Mr. Richard Corcoran of Chicago as home teacher, and he is now traveling about and becoming acquainted with the blind people of this state. . . . Construction is well underway on the new school in Grand Forks. The contractors plan to work all winter."

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